

"The Father's House"

The Present Truth – April 12, 1900

E. J. Waggoner

Many of you have no doubt noticed the sweet, merry songs of the birds, that are again filling the air with melody, as if to welcome the returning sunshine, and to help to awaken the spring flowers that are sleeping later than usual this year, because of the cold weather, which makes them keep tucked up in their warm winter wrappings for fear of being nipped by the frost.

The morning, as the daylight comes in, is the time when the bird songs seem the fullest and sweetest. And the springtime, which is the bright morning of the year, when the sun returns to waken nature from its long winter sleep, is the time when the birds burst out into their sweetest notes of joyous song.

Now of all times, when they are so happy and busy, building their nests and preparing for the summer's work of rearing their young ones, they seem to call the most attention to themselves, and we are most inclined to "Behold the birds of the air," and learn from these, His little messengers, the lessons that God would have them teach us.

One of the things that Jesus tells us to notice about them is, that "Your Heavenly Father feedeth them." Though they have "neither storehouse nor barn, though they neither sow nor reap," and are not able to make any provision for themselves, yet they are not troubled and anxious about where the next meal is to come from.

Mr. Spurgeon tells of a little girl who lived in the city where she was accustomed to seeing birds kept in cages, and she must have thought that this was the natural and proper life for little birds. For when she was taken for the first time to the country, where she saw the free birds flying in the air, and hiding among the branches of the trees, she said to her mother, "O mamma, look at those poor little birds! they have not got any cages!"

The "poor little birds" would a great deal rather be without the cage, even though it might mean food and water always within sight. For though they are fortunate enough to have no cages, they do have a house, a large, free beautiful house. "Yea, the sparrow hath found an house, and the swallow a nest for herself where she may lay her young, even Thine altars. O Lord of hosts."

This is what David said when he was talking about God's house. God dwells everywhere and in all things, filling the heavens and the earth with His holy presence. Wherever God dwells is of course His house; and so of every place we may say like Jacob, "The Lord is in this place." "This is none other than the house of God."

Everything that God has made in heaven and earth is a part of His great family; and "the whole family in heaven and earth" dwells in "the Father's house." God's

dwelling place is the home of all His creatures; but it is such a large place, and we perhaps do not know more than our own little corner of it. We do not now understand and "know the length and breadth, and depth and height." Yet we may rest content and happy, knowing that we are in the Father's house, and that He is with us, caring for all our needs.

Like us, the birds are "the offspring of God," and they too dwell in His house, and are fed from His table. "These wait all upon Thee, that Thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That Thou givest them, they gather."

Many of these little birds have seen more of "the Father's house" than you have; for they have been on a long, long journey over land and sea, since last we heard them sing in the autumn. When there was no food for them here, God guided them to another part of His house, where they would find plenty to eat through the winter. Now He has brought them back to sing to us through the summer, and to teach us this lesson among others: "Happy are they that dwell in Thy house; they will be still praising Thee."

The songs of praise seem to well up from their light hearts, as though they had heard the words of Jesus, "Not one" of them shall fall without the Father's notice. "He feedeth them." So they have no care, for He careth for them. And if for them, how much more for you, who dwell also in His house, and are "of more value than many sparrows."

So we may learn from the birds that

"His goodness stands approved,
Unchanged from day to day,"

and then like the birds we shall

"Drop our burdens at His feet
And bear a song away."